RRR
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The Menace of Egalitarianism

by Murray N. Rothbard

After the New Left of the late 1960s and early 70s had been discredited by its bizarre turn to violence, it took the advice of its liberal elders and joined the system. New Leftists launched a successful Gramscian long march through the institutions, and by becoming lawyers and academics particularly in the humanities, philosophy, and the soft social sciences they have managed to acquire hegemony over our culture. Seeing themselves defeated and routed on the strictly economic front (in contrast to the Old Left of the 1930s, Marxian economics and the labor theory of value was never the New Left's strong suit), the Left turned to the allegedly moral high ground of egalitarianism. And, as they did so, they turned increasingly to de-emphasizing old-fashioned economic egalitarianism in favor of stamping out broader aspects of human variety.

Older egalitarianism stressed making income or wealth equal; but, as Helmut Schoeck brilliantly realized, the logic of their argument was to stamp out in the name of fairness, all instances of human diversity and therefore implicit or explicit superiority of some persons over others. In short, envy of the superiority of others is to be institutionalized, and all possible sources of such envy eradicated.

In his book on *Envy*, Helmut Schoeck analyzed a chilling dystopian novel by the British writer, L.P. Hartley. In his work, *Facial Justice*, published in 1960, Hartley, extrapolating from the attitudes he saw in British life after World War II, opens by noting that after the Third World War, Justice had made great strides. Economic Justice, Social Justice, and other forms of justice had been achieved, but there were still areas of life to conquer. In particular, *Facial Justice* had not yet been attained, since pretty girls had an unfair advantage over ugly ones. Hence, under the direction of the Ministry of Face Equality, all Alpha (pretty) girls and all Gamma (ugly) girls were forced to undergo operations at the Equalization (Faces) Centre so as all to attain Beta (pleasantly average) faces.

The key to being Politically Correct is to never, ever, in any area, make judgments of difference or superiority.

Coincidentally, in 1961, Kurt Vonnegut published a pithy and even more bitterly satirical short story depicting a comprehensively egalitarian society, even more thoroughgoing than Hartley's. Vonnegut's Harrison Bergeron begins: "The year was 2081, and everybody was finally equal. They weren't only equal before God

(Cont. page 4, col. 2)

THE EAR

by Sarah Barton

America's Only Libertarian Gossip Columnist

Hey, what's this? Bill ("Mr. Machiavelli") Evers is outdoing even his own formidable record for intrigue. Now, he's trying to recruit support for Professor Earl Ravenal, as LP candidate for President! The beauty part is that Bill was largely responsible for smashing Earl's race for the LF nomination at the 1983 convention, when Earl was the stooge-candidate of Ed "Sexual Diversity" Crane and the Kochtopus. Politics sure makes strange bedfellows!

But what's happened to Bill's judgment? Has he outfoxed himself at last? Why should Earl run now that the LP is falling apart, when he was kicked in the teeth when the party was a lot stronger? Is Bill trying to cozy up to the Crane Machine, after all these years?

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The California LP convention at Monterey, traditionally on the President's Birthday week-

(Cont. next page,col. 1)

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(THE EAR cont. from P.1)

end, suffered the poorest attendance in many years. Mike Emerling, the failed stand-up comic and smarmy operator who runs the Andre Marrou campaign for President, managed to arrange for Dick Boddie to speak on Friday night, when almost no one was there, while Emerling orchestrated a "roast" for Marrou at the better-attended Saturday night banquet.

Reports are that Boddie is steamed at this treatment, and I don't blame him; he was hardly seen at the convention. If he's steamed enough, the fur will fly, because there are a lot of enemies of Marrou and Emerling who are ready to drop some long-stored-up nuclear bombs on the Marrou campaign!

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The Ear hears that, now that Marrou and Emerling are both divorced, they're living cozily in a house in Vegas, along with Jim Lewis and their Marrou-for-President office. Anti-Marrou forces are calling the house "the Fuhrer bunker."

It's embarrassing, but Marrou and Emerling won't even get the votes of the Las Vegas LP; Chuck Gershleider, long-time LP activist, is a biggie in the Boddie camp, and will be dominating the delegation. I guess their hometown knows them all too well.

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Wild-eyed Terry Mitchell, a hard-core activist and former national director of the LP, is out gunning (batting?) for Bill Evers. Mitchell, an itinerant activist for drug legalization, hates Evers because Bill led the campaign to kick Mitchell out as director for allegedly making "racist" remarks. Terry is on the way from Texas to San Francisco to do some druggie organizing, and he threatens to "bash Ever's brains out with a baseball bat"! Could be Texan rhetoric, of course, but then again, Terry *is* wild of eye, and he *does* hate Billy.

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The once-powerful Washington State LP is Getting Theirs. Veteran Arkansas LP leader Alan Lindsay's very effective guerrilla war against the LP ruling elite is beginning to pay off in a big way. Alan filed a complaint with the Federal Election Commission (FEC) on the machinations of the Ruth Bennett-Karen Allard clique that ran the last national LP convention in Seattle in 1987. It seems that after this team earned plenty from the convention, they turned over the money to their new, non-profit Invisible Hand Foundation, instead of over to the LP itself. Bennett & Co. claim that the statute of limitations has run out on their activities, but the latest news is that the FEC has turned that claim down. In other words, the FEC is taking the complaint *very seriously*. And that's bad news for the team, and for the Washington LP. Look out, gang: the Invisible Hand is about to meet the Visible Fist.

And what's going to happen to Big Bill Bradford, editor/publisher of *Liberty*? Bradford, a good friend of Karen, is now on the board of Invisible Hand. Take my advice, Bill: make yourself *in*visible, and fast!

In the meanwhile, as if things were not tough enough for these people, a serious movement is afoot to dissolve the state party altogether at its May 18 convention, and to replace it with a decentralized issue-oriented organization that would not participate in elections. *What*? After all the *victories* the LP has had at the polls?

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Have you ever wondered, as I have, how in the world that boob Andre Marrou ever got to be a State Representative (albeit one-term) in Alaska? From which he has now advanced to his present eminence as leading candidate for the LP nomination for president this year?

Well, dears, I just found out the poop. There was, in this Republican district, a big-shot political consultant who doubled in off-campaign months as a boxing promoter. Then suddenly, in election year, the incumbent Republican Representative, a physician, decided to launch a campaign to outlaw boxing in Alaska for paternalistic medical reasons. The biggie consultant, his livelihood at stake, panicked. It was too late to oppose the doc in the primary, and the Democratic party there is nowhere. And so the boxing promoter-consultant went to Andre, then an LP candidate on the ballot with no chance to win. Andre, it seems, and wonder of wonders! had a reputation in the district as a mean SOB and a loser. And so the promoter went to Andre and told him this: Look, Andre, I will support you in the election, but you have to do what I'm telling you: keep your mouth shut, let us do the campaigning, and be NICE to everyone for the rest of the campaign. If you see a guy with a flat tire on the road, get out and HELP him!

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Andre managed to stick with the deal, and duly kept his mouth shut. The biggie did some research, and found some statement by the incumbent that could be interpreted as pro-gun control. He and various other important Republican friends got together, took out ads, and hammered away on the doctor as soft on gun control, electing Andre in the process.

After his glorious victory, the boxing promoter went to Andre and said, this is it, fella, I won't help you in politics ever again. Result: Andre lost his re-election bid to a Republican.

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The *RRR* has gotten so many requests for my photo that Burt Blumert asked me to comply. OK, Burt, here it is. But I'm not telling how long ago it was taken!

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Why am I not surprised? The April issue of *Reason* heralds the "cryonics" movement, which *Massachusetts Liberty* tells us is 90% Libertarian. (This is the movement where they get frozen before death and wait to get thawed out in a happier century when death has been overcome.) Yes, yes. Go Modal, go for it, don't wait, Get Frozen Now!

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The Libertarian Party is broke, says the LP executive committee. Finance chairman Steve Alexander has been canned and replaced by First Friend Don Ernsberger, best buddy of LP chairman Dave Walter and a public school employee whose successful fundraising experience is zip, *nada*, zero.

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Amidst the wreckage, the LP excom is worried about complaints from list renters about "unprofessional messages" in the party's mailing lists. Some LP members adopt middle names like "Liberty or Death," "Peyote," or claims to sexual prowess not printable in a family newsletter, and LP employees have typed these monikers into the data base.

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A telephone poll conducted during the late Iraqi pogrom showed half of the members of the LP to be pro-war. That's the LP: united on LSD and kiddie porn; divided on murdering foreigners.

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Ed Crane has hired Sheldon Richman, recently fired by IHS at Richie Fink's orders, to work at the Cato Institute. Does this mean a heating up of the long-running Crane-Fink war?

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Ed Crane is bragging that

UNCONVENTIONAL WISDOM WATCH

Kochtopus Edition

The plethora of organizations owned by the billionaire Koch brothers of Wichita continue to dominate libertarianism, despite Sarah Barton.

PLAYERS		*RRR* Wisdom
Ed Crane	⬌	Still "Mr. Left Libertarian," but earns credit for hiring Sheldon Richman.
Sheldon Richman	⬆	Smart new Cato staffer will concentrate on the Middle East, where he is *very* sound.
David Boaz	⬆	Calls himself a "paleo-libertarian."
Richie Fink	⬌	Still has foot on George Pearson's neck, but lost fight over hiring Richman.
George Pearson	⬇	May soon be running the health club at Koch Industries. Period.
Manuel Johnson	⬇	Ex-vice chairman of the Federal Reserve, now Koch prof at GMU and head of Koch center for international money, campaigns for new world monetary order.
Leonard Liggio	⬆	A beacon of decency. Too bad they got rid of him.
David Koch	⬆	Quick thinking in that LAX crash, but why the cheapo flight?
Charles Koch	⬇	Quit worrying. The Indians can't take it all. Can they?
Bill Koch	?	Getting ready to send another smart bomb into the Wichita bunker? - **F.S.T.**

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Charles Koch will buy *Reason* magazine for him and move it to Cato—a move vociferously opposed by Richie Fink. A previous attempt fell through when Charles refused to meet libertarian giant (and *Reason* founder) Bob Poole's price by $10,000.

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An old "acquaintance" of Ed Crane's was hired by a Kochtopus organization, and their first criterion—before experience, salary, or ideology—was Yours Truly. Did she know R, R, or S? Would she keep her mouth shut? Did she realize she would be instantly fired, and permanently blackballed, if she leaked any info? "Sarah," she told me, "your little jabs are driving them even further up the wall than you think." P.S. She got the job, and I got another mole.

The neocon takeover of libertarian organizations continues at top speed.

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Neocon warmonger (or do I repeat myself?) Elliot Abrams, son-in-law to Norman Podhoretz and Midge Decter, is a new trustee at Francisco Marroquin University in Guatemala. The neocon takeover of libertarian organizations (Manhattan, *Reason*, Cato, etc.) continues at top speed.

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Wore my new dress to the Cato party, and *no one noticed* because they spent the entire evening denouncing the second R for being politically incorrect. Sure he is, but *that's why we love him!* ●

(The Menace... cont. from P.1)

and the law. They were equal every which way. Nobody was smarter than anybody else. Nobody was better looking than anybody else. Nobody was stronger or quicker than anybody else. All this equality was due to the 211th, 212th, and 213th Amendments to the Constitution, and to the unceasing vigilance of agents of the United States Handicapper General."

The handicapping worked partly as follows: "Hazel had a perfectly average intelligence, which meant she couldn't think about anything except in short bursts. And George, while his intelligence was way above normal, had a little mental handicap radio in his ear. He was required by law to wear it at all times. It was tuned to a government transmitter. Every twenty minutes or so, the transmitter would send out some sharp noise to keep people like George from taking unfair advantage of their brains."

This sort of egalitarian emphasis on non-economic inequalities has proliferated and intensified in the decades since these men penned their seemingly exaggerated Orwellian dystopias. In academic and literary circles Political Correctness is now enforced with an increasingly iron hand; and the key to being Politically Correct is never, ever, in any area, to make judgments of difference or superiority. Thus, we find that a Smith College handout from the Office of Student Affairs lists ten different kinds of oppression allegedly inflicted by making judgments about people. They include: heterosexism, defined as oppression of those with non-heterosexual orientations, which include not acknowledging their existence; and ablism, defined as oppression of the differently abled (known in less enlightened days as disabled or handicapped), by the temporarily able. Particularly relevant to our two dystopian writers is ageism, oppression of the young and the old by youngish and middle-aged adults, and lookism (or looksism), defined as the construction of a standard of beauty/attractiveness.

Oppression is also supposed to consist, not only of discriminating in some way against the unattractive, but even in noticing the difference. Perhaps the most chilling recently created category is logism or logo-centricism, the tyranny of the knowledgeable and articulate. A set of feminist scholarship guidelines sponsored by the state of New Jersey for its college campuses attacks knowledge and scientific inquiry *per se* as a male rape of nature. It charges: mind was "male. Nature was female, and knowledge was created as an act of aggression. A passive nature had to be interrogated, unclothed, penetrated, and compelled by man to reveal her secrets."

Oppression is of course broadly defined so as to indict the very existence of possible superiority and therefore an occasion for envy in any realm. The dominant literary theory of deconstructionism fiercely argues that there can be

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no standards to judge one literary text superior to another. At a recent conference, when one political science professor referred correctly to Czeslaw Milosz's book *The Captive Mind* as a classic, another female professor declared that "the very word classic makes me feel oppressed." The clear implication is that any reference to someone else's superior product may engender resentment and envy in the rank-and-file, and that catering to these feelings of oppression must be the central focus of scholarship and criticism.

The whole point of academia and other research institutions has always been an untrammelled search for truth. This ideal has now been challenged and superseded by catering to the sensitive feelings of the politically correct. This emphasis on subjective feelings rather than truth is evident in the current furor over the teaching of the distinguished Berkeley anthropologist, Vincent Sarich. Sarich's examination of genetic influences on racial differences in achievement was denounced by a fellow faculty member as "attempting to destroy the self-esteem of black students in the class."

Indeed, one radical change has been the rapid and accelerating transformation of old-fashioned egalitarianism, which wanted to make every individual equal, into group-egalitarianism on behalf of groups that are officially designated as oppressed. In employment, positions, and status generally, oppressed groups are supposed to be guaranteed their quotal share of the well-paid or prestigious positions. (No one seems to be agitating for quotal representation in the ranks of ditch-diggers.) I first attacked this trend in a paper on the quotal representation for designated groups insisted upon by the McGovern movement at the 1972 Democratic Convention. These victorious Democrats insisted that groups such as women, youth, blacks, and Chicanos had fallen below their quotal proportion of the population as elected delegates to previous conventions; this had to be rectified by the Democratic Party overriding the choices of their members and insisting upon due quotal representation of these allegedly oppressed groups. I noted the particular idiocy of the claim that youths aged 18-25 had been grievously under- represented in the past, and indulged in what would now be called a politically inappropriate *reductio ad absurdum* by suggesting an immediate correction to the heinous and chronic under representation of five-year-old "men and women."

It is difficult to parody a movement which seems to be a living self-parody.

And yet, only two years before that convention, another form of quotal appeal had met with proper scorn and ridicule from left-liberals. When one of President Nixon's failed Supreme Court nominees was derided as being mediocre, Senator Roman Hruska (R., Neb.) wondered why the mediocre folk of America did not deserve representation on the highest Court. Liberal critics mockingly charged the Senator with engaging in special pleading. The self-same charge, levelled against denouncers of logism would drive such critics from public life. But times, and standards of Political Correctness, have changed.

It is difficult, indeed, to parody or satirize a movement which seems to be a living self-parody, and which can bring about such deplorable results. Thus, two eminent American historians, Bernard Bailyn and Stephan Thernstrom, were literally forced to abandon their course at Harvard on the history of American race relations, because of absurd charges of racism levelled by a few students, charges that were treated with utmost seriousness by everyone concerned. Of particular interest here was the charge against Bailyn's course on race relations in the colonial era. The student grievance against Bailyn is that he had read from the diary of a Southern planter without giving equal time to the memoirs of a slave.

To the complainants, this practice clearly amounted to a "covert defense of slavery." Bailyn had patiently explained during the offending lecture that no diaries, journals, or letters by slaves in that era had ever been found. But

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to these students, Bailyn had clearly failed to understand the problem: Since it was impossible to give equal representation to the slaves, Bailyn ought to have dispensed with the planter's diary altogether.

Spokesmen for group quotas in behalf of the oppressed (labelled for public relations purposes with the positive-sounding phrase affirmative action) generally claim that a quota system is the furthest thing from their minds: that all they want is positive action to increase representation of the favored groups. They are either being flagrantly disingenuous or else fail to understand elementary arithmetic. If Oppressed Group *X* is to have its representation increased from, say, 8 to 20%, then *some* group or combination of groups is going to have their total representation reduced by 12%. The hidden, or sometimes not-so-hidden, agenda, of course, is that the quotal declines are supposed to occur in the ranks of designated Oppressor Groups, who presumably deserve their fate.

In this regime of group egalitarianism, it becomes particularly important to take one's place in the ranks of the Oppressed rather than the Oppressors. Who, then, *are* the Oppressed? It is difficult to determine, since new groups of oppressed are being discovered all the time. One almost longs for the good old days of classic Marxism, when there was only one oppressed class, the proletariat, and one or at most a very few classes of oppressors: the capitalists or bourgeois, plus sometimes the feudal landlords or perhaps the petit bourgeoisie. But now, as the ranks of the oppressed and therefore the groups specially privileged by society and the State keep multiplying, and the ranks of the oppressors keep dwindling, the problem of income and wealth egalitarianism reappears and is redoubled. For more and greater varieties of groups are continually being added to the parasitic burden weighing upon an ever-dwindling supply of oppressors. And since it is obviously worth everyone's while to leave the ranks of the oppressors and move over to the oppressed, pressure groups will increasingly succeed in doing so, so long as this dysfunctional ideology continues to flourish.

Professor Saul D. Feldman, himself a distinguished short, had at last brought science to bear on the age-old oppression of the shorts by the talls.

Specifically, achieving the label of Officially Oppressed entitles one to share in an endless flow of benefits in money, status, and prestige from the hapless Oppressors, who are made to feel guilty forevermore, even as they are forced to sustain and expand the endless flow. It is not surprising that attaining oppressed status takes a great deal of pressure and organization. As Joseph Sobran wittily puts it: it takes a lot of clout to be a victim. Eventually, if trends continue, the result must be the twin death of parasite and host alike, and an end to any flourishing economy or civilization.

There is virtually an infinite number of groups or classes in society: the class of people named Smith, the class of men over 6 feet tall, the class of bald people, and so on. Which of these groups may find themselves among the oppressed? Who knows? It is easy to invent a new oppressed group. I might come up with a study, for example, demonstrating that the class of people named Doe has an average income or wealth or status lower than that of other names. I could then coin a hypothesis that people named Doe have been discriminated against because their names John Doe and Jane Doe have been stereotyped as associated with faceless anonymity, and Presto, we have one more group who are able to leave the burdened ranks of the oppressors and join the happy ranks of the oppressed.

A political theorist friend of mine thought he could coin a satiric Oppressed Group: short people, who suffer from heightism. I informed him that he was seriously anticipated two decades ago, again demonstrating the impossibility of parodying the current ideology. I noted in an article almost twenty years ago that Professor Saul D. Feldman, a sociologist at Case-Western Reserve, and himself a distinguished short, had at last brought science to bear on the age-old oppression of the shorts by the talls. Feldman reported that out of recent University of Pitts-

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burgh graduating seniors, those 6'2" and taller received an average starting salary 12.4% higher than graduates under 6', and that a marketing professor at Eastern Michigan University had quizzed 140 business recruiters about their preferences between two hypothetical, equally qualified applicants for the job of salesman. One of the hypothetical salesmen was to be 6'1" the other 5'5". The recruiters answered as follows: 27% expressed the politically correct no preference; 1% would hire the short man; and no less than 72% would hire the tallie.

I asked for short pride, short institutes, short history courses, short quotas everywhere.

In addition to this clear-cut oppression of talls over shorts, Feldman pointed out that women notoriously prefer tall over short men. He might have pointed out, too that Alan Ladd could only play the romantic lead in movies produced by bigoted Hollywood moguls by standing on a hidden box, and that even the great character actor Sydney Greenstreet was invariably shot upward from a low-placed camera to make him appear much taller than he was. (The Hollywood studio heads were generally short themselves, but were betraying their short comrades by pandering to the pro-tall culture.) Feldman also perceptively pointed to the anti-short prejudice that pervades our language in such phrases as people being "short-sighted, short-changed, short-circuited, and short in cash." He added that among the two major party candidates for president, the taller is almost invariably elected.

I went on in my article to call for a short liberation movement to end short oppression, and asked: where are the short corporation leaders, the short bankers, the short senators and presidents? I asked for short pride, short institutes, short history courses, short quotas everywhere, and for shorts to stop internalizing the age-old propaganda of our tall culture that shorts are genetically or culturally inferior. (Look at Napoleon!) Short people, arise! You have nothing to lose but your elevator shoes.

I ended by assuring the tallies that we were *not* anti-tall, and that we welcome progressive, guilt-ridden talls as pro-short sympathizers and auxiliaries in our movement. If my own consciousness had been sufficiently raised at the time, I would have of course added a demand that the talls compensate the shorts for umpteen thousand years of tall tyranny.

The above is excerpted from the new introduction to M.N.R.'s classic *Freedom, Inequality, Primitivism, and the Division of Labor*, due out soon from the Mises Institute. ●

Useful Idiocies

by Joseph Sobran

Now I know how liberals felt about Nixon. As I watch that cynical ninny George Bush congratulating himself on his easy victory over Iraq, I feel the total exasperation one feels in the presence of invincible moral complacency.

Bush is reaping undeserved glory from the efficiency of the U.S. military machine. People are even saying he'll be unbeatable in 1992. I don't know about that, but he does seem certain to escape the war crimes trial I'd envisioned. (That was *my* first step toward a New World Order.)

Well, you have to hand it to the armed forces. Bush ordered them to kill a rat, no matter what the cost, and they went out and did it. Somehow the skill of their execution has made the order itself seem inspired. So the public is cheering Bush, instead of asking the obvious question: If this Iraqi bird was such a pushover, how could he ever have been the threat Bush said he was?

As usual, victory justifies itself. We've gotten so caught up in the success of the war that it no longer matters whether there was any reason for it in the first place. The thing is, we won!

Ah, the ways of the modern state. Saddam Hussein threatened our "vital national interests." But do you know a single real human being who said, "My God! If someone doesn't stop this guy, I'm a goner!"? No, you don't. Nobody specifieable was menaced by him. True, as one Canadian observer writes, the West has a

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recurrent nightmare of an Arab oil empire united under one despot who, in his fanatical hatred of the West, turns off the spigot, throwing the world economy off the tracks. But it can never happen. As the same observer puts it, the chance of such a thing is like the chance that New Zealand will refuse to export wool. (And that's supposing such an empire could be assembled and held together.)

So: was this triumph worth the three hundred or so American lives it cost? I suppose one could say, "It was worth a *million* American lives, as long as one of them wasn't mine." But for my part, it wasn't worth the trouble of learning where to put the apostrophe in Ba'ath.

The delusion that there were unambiguous "national interests," however, is such stuff as states are made on. A friend of mine, the brilliant sociologist John Murray Cuddihy, has given us the phrase "accredited victim status," a shaft of irony against the way we indiscriminately confer presumptive victimhood on whole categories of people (blacks, Jews, women) without regard to the data of their individual lives. The state is fond of designated victims, designated villains, designated "problems." These are the means by which it imposes its priorities, with bogus urgency, on all of us.

War is the paradigm. In statist mythology, a single evil force threatens all of us. And the designated enemy is usually a bad enough hombre, all right: bad enough, at least, that few want to defend him and, more to the point, bad enough to accommodate such melodramatics that it becomes awkward even to argue that he's bad but not dangerous to *us*. A Hitler or Hussein does in fact threaten *some* people, and it's all in a day's work for some demagogue to persuade a multitude, who can't find Poland or Kuwait with both hands, that "stopping" him is at once a humanitarian duty and a necessity of self-preservation. (And anyone who says otherwise is either a fool or a covert partisan of the foe.)

And with false rationality, the state asserts the necessity of concentrating "our" resources in its own hands to meet the challenge. All the normal rules of freedom and property are set aside in deference to its emergency purpose; in the terms favored by Michael Oakshott and F.A. Hayek, nomocracy yields to telocracy, and rule-governed order is converted to end-governed order.

But war is a risky enterprise. It can become too terribly (and obviously) costly, and therefore unpopular. So states adopt other enterprises, using war metaphorically as the model: war on poverty, war on illiteracy, and so forth. The designated "problem" is always bad enough that most people will agree that "something must be done," and resistance can be stigmatized as indifference or inhumanity.

A normal man thinks of war as an emergency measure. This is precisely why it's so sinister that war has become the model for everyday politics. Political "leadership" is thought to consist in adopting telocratic projects for the state to pursue. Even a conventional Republican like Bush thinks this way now. I voted for him because I supposed he'd be more or less residually nomocratic, but he's turning out to be the Republican LBJ, expanding the state every which way and taking downright pride in doing so.

This world is full of evils and problems, and each of us has to cope with them in his own way, with his own resources. You have your vindictive ex-wife, I have my arthritis, our friend has his debts. There is no particular common denominator among our troubles. It's artificial to speak of "our" chief problem, when each of us has his unique one; and it's preposterous for the state to designate a "national" problem, to which each citizen must subordinate his private concerns. But this is the idiom of politics now, as the state arbitrarily selects and gives a false focus to a few turbid discontents in the ocean of human miseries and dissatisfactions.

It's amazing how submissive most people are. They accept it as perfectly legitimate for the state to define "our" supposed problems and enemies. As I say, nobody was afraid of what Saddam Hussein might do to him; but everyone is afraid of what his own government may do to him, and with good reason: he stands under the scrutiny of tax agencies, local police, regulatory agencies, social workers, and myriad other official potential troublemakers. They grumble about the greed and corruption of "elected" but somehow irremovable politicians, and they hate the "mild despotism" de Tocqueville accurately foresaw

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as the terminus of decadent democracy. They know from experience that power is actually wielded directly by bureaucrats, delegated to them by an obscurely complicated process that makes it meaningless to speak of the consent of the governed. And yet when their state goes to war, they support it with an atavistic loyalty, as if it were an extension of themselves, rather than they of it.

But maybe it's just human nature. When slave owners fight, I suppose it's natural for each slave to root for his own master. After all, the master will probably have convinced him he's awfully lucky not to be owned by someone else. ●

Lessons of The Gulf War

by M.N.R.

Every war supplies us with lessons we must learn. There were the lessons of Munich and the lessons of Vietnam. It is not too early for us to learn the lessons of the Gulf War, lest we lose the peace.

1. *War is wonderful.* We have learned at last that war is glorious, war is wonderful. As they said about the Spanish-American war, this was a "splendid little war." Our war effort from now on can be so high-tech that no American need die in one ever again. Three times as many American soldiers died in accidents in the Gulf before the war began than during the actual fighting. Deaths among enemy soldiers and civilians are solely the fault of the Evil Enemy.

From now on, the only opponents of an American war will be traitors, yellow-bellies, Commies, neo-Nazis, and anti-Semites.

War is also a great unifier. Petty domestic problems, such as taxes, deficits, banking crises, are forgotten in the great uplifting current that brings back to America a sense of unity, of belonging, of common national purpose. Those who grumble at that unity are traitors and yellow-bellies.

2. *Don't let them surrender.* Too many times Americans have won a splendid war only to lose the peace. One problem is the end game, the whole problem of surrender, who we accept surrender from, on what terms, etc. During the Gulf War we approached perfection by not letting them surrender. First, we set the goal of "unconditional Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait." When Iraq accepted those terms, we complained that they didn't accept reparations, they weren't clear about coming out with their hands up, and besides, we wanted to hear it from Saddam himself. When Saddam himself complied, we raised all the above objections, and we kept bombing, or "pounding." [Hey guys, how about coming up with a synonym for "pound"? If I had a dime for every time the media used "pound," I'd be a very rich man.]

And then, when they obviously began to withdraw, we said: "*That's* not 'withdrawal' (good); that's 'retreat' (bad)."

Demanding "unconditional surrender," as we did in World War II, was great, but again we got bogged down in end-game problems. Clearly, the best strategy for the end game is *never* to accept any surrender at all. Let's just keep "pounding" the enemy *until nobody moves.* Let's keep it simple and clear-cut. Or to use the common American slogan of divine impatience: "Let's get it over with," or "let's finish the job." If we pound until we kill them all, until nobody moves, then we don't have to worry anymore about "losing the peace." The peace will be ours forever, the job will be finished forever.

To put a more rigorous twist on the old song:

> "We'll be over,
> We're comin' over,
> And we won't be back
> 'Till there's *nothin'* over
> there."

3. *Take over the media.* We did a great job, in the Gulf War, in censoring, curbing, and confining the media. The media lost us the Korean and Vietnam Wars. The media are a bunch of traitors, yellow-bellies, etc. The media injure American morale. The media prattle about "gathering the news," and "giving us the truth." What they don't understand is that only the President deserves the truth. All public truth helps the Enemy.

The American people, thank goodness, now hate the media, with their subversion and their prying questions. The media are a bunch of individualists who won't go along with the program. Now we must finish the job. The federal government must take over the media. Issue licenses, certificates of convenience and

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necessity, to all media people. And if they don't knuckle under and show proper respect to the President and his officers, just pull their licenses.

What, you say this would violate the First Amendment? Rubbish. We do it now with radio and TV; the FCC can pull their licenses at any time. All we'd have to do is have the FCC show some spine. And the much-reviled Alien and Sedition Acts were never declared unconstitutional. The Supreme Court will follow the election returns.

The objective should be for all the media to be, in effect, agitprop arms of the President and the federal government. They're mostly at that point already. Let's finish the job.

4. *Abolish Congress.* Congress is a pain in the neck, a bunch of quibblers and fusspots who accomplish nothing, who only obstruct and delay (sometimes) the plans of the President. As neoconservative theorists have instructed us, the President embodies in his person the entire national and public interest. The President represents each and every one of us. But Congressmen are only bogged down in petty, narrow concerns of each district or state. So let's get rid of Congress; let's finish it off.

Or rather, let's have a constitutional amendment that abolishes elections, which are at best an expensive drain on the taxpayer, and replaces them with the best and wisest men and women appointed by the President and replaceable at his will. Then he could get the best counsel for the national interest, free of partisan, political considerations.

5. *Let's get rid of political parties.* We keep praising the "two-party system" without realizing that there is nothing in the Constitution that mandates parties, two or whatever. The Founding Fathers hated parties, which they called "factions." Parties are divisive, they cripple American unity, and they cost the taxpayer money by requiring elections. Besides, the Republican Party will never again lose a Presidential election, and since we will get rid of Congress anyway, why not face reality? Let's combine both parties into one glorious party, call it the Democrat-Republicans, as under Jefferson, or maybe Republican-Democrats to reflect current realities. Then we'd all be united, and any disagreements could be ironed out *within* a one-party framework.

If anyone suspects that there's something dictatorial or un-American about a one-party system, think nothing of it. There is ample precedent; American had a one-party system (Democrat-Republican) from about 1815 to 1827. No one suffered; in fact, it is called by historians the Era of Good Feelings. No problem.

6. *Let's make George Bush President for Life.* Everyone knows that elections are too darn frequent, forcing our leaders to turn away from their great leadership at the helm of state to worry about our petty concerns. And besides, it's expensive for the taxpayer. So we can simply make George Bush president for life, and then, when he dies or retires, we can have a glorious Democratic-Republican convention, to select his successor. What could be more truly democratic?

7. *Free Up the President.* If Lessons 1 to 6 were put in place, our President would then at last be free, free of the crippling restraints of Congress, of elections, and of the yellow-bellied, traitorous, etc. media. With Congress and the media united in service to the President, he would be free to unify the nation, he could write laws in the form of his own executive decrees, he could set his budget and levy his taxes (and cut the capital gains tax, by God). He would also be free to run his New World Order abroad, to obliterate the Enemy for, say, $100 billion, and then spend another $100 billion to rebuild the enemy lands. War and reconstruction contractors will be happy and prosperous, and this will provide plenty of jobs and keep America prosperous as well. The President will get 98% approval rating in the polls, which can serve as a scientific substitute for messy and grubby elections.

Some carping critics (the 2 percent yellow-bellies, etc. above—and there are always a few rotten apples in every glorious barrel) might claim that we would lose our freedom and that the President would be a dictator.

But that would be the biggest lie of them all. For we must always remember that the President represents us, that in the deepest sense the President *is* us and that we *are* the President, and that therefore when the President is set free and is unrestrained, we are all free.

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George Herbert Walker Bush: The Power and the Glory

by M.N.R.

I confess. I'm a sinner. I didn't see the Signs. Yes, I opposed the Gulf War, from beginning to end. I was against the war before January 16. I was against it all during the 100 Hour Miracle. But now the scales have fallen from my eyes. I was blind but now I see.

Michael Novak, a Catholic theologian truly fit for our times, likes to call Democracy "the Incarnation." Close and prophetic, but not quite right. For now it is clear that it is George Herbert Walker Bush who is The Incarnation to lead us into His New World Order, the Kingdom of God on Earth. Yes, God works His Miracles in strange and mysterious ways, but it is indeed and verily the improbable figure of George Bush, ex-dithering wimp, who has been Transformed. You can see it in the new nobility of his glance, his bearing, the divine assurance of his leadership, and his noble vision. Just as God parted the waters for the children of Israel, so he has wrought the Miracle of the Massacre in the Gulf War.

He has wrought the Miracle of the Massacre in the Gulf War.

There can no longer be any doubt that George Bush is the Expected One, the Anointed One, the Man who has been sent here to heal the sick, to put an end to poverty and misery, to bring justice to all the peoples of the earth. We must repent and prostrate ourselves before His Majesty and beg forgiveness. We must all join in the ecstatic unity that brought us our glorious victory in war, and bring that same unity, that same singleness of purpose, to all the wars of peacetime: to the wars against poverty, racism, sexism, and injustice. We must end sedition, put a stop to the pockets of dissent, and deal harshly with those grumblers and troublemakers who still deny the miracle.

And to think: George Bush was accused by those grumblers, among whom I admit I was one, who thought he lacked "that vision thing." Wow, what a vision! What a Man!

But there is one problem: where are the poets, where are the noble rhetors who will sing the praises of George Bush as they should be sung? Where are the bards of yesteryear? In our current debased rhetoric, the best we can come up with is *Human Events'* banner headline: "Hail to the Chief!" Surely we can do better than that! Where in hell is our official Poet Laureate, some guy named Mark Strand? Why isn't he composing a hymn to this wonderful day?

No, to honor George Bush as he should be honored, we have to fall back on older and greater poets. I offer two:

> And the government shall
> be upon his shoulder:
> And his name shall be called
> Wonderful, Counselor,
> The Mighty God,
> The everlasting Father,
> The Prince of Peace.

and Bush's Prayer:

> Give us this day our daily
> bread,
> And forgive us our
> trespasses,
> As we forgive those who
> trespass against us.
> And lead us not into
> temptation,
> But deliver us from evil.
> For thine is the kingdom,
> and the power, and the
> glory, forever,
> Amen. ●

The Danger of Victory

by Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr.

One of the hidden costs of war is greater deference to the government. We tend to assume that if the feds can beat Iraq, they can do anything. All of a sudden, the normal ideological barriers to government growth are leveled, and politicians start an offensive against our pocketbooks.

"Government set a goal, mobilized half a million people, moved more material than any time since World War II," says Rep. Robert Wise (D-W.VA). "Why can't you do the same thing in education, in infrastructure, in

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health care?" This thinking, already widespread, will be repeated endlessly by big-government types in the coming months.

Yet the government is already engaged in a number of "wars" at home: against drugs, poverty, AIDS, smoking, racism, etc. None has been won, but that doesn't stop liberals like Mr. Wise from wanting to adopt war as the model for all government actions, complete with higher taxes, increased regulation, mobilized public opinion, and centralized economic planning.

War is inherently a collectivist, State-run enterprise, but that is hardly a proper paradigm for domestic society, except in the U.S.S.R. Putting government in charge of defeating poverty or racism or sickness is an unlimited grant of power.

The Pentagons of our domestic wars, like HUD and HHS, are one big snafu now. Expand the welfare state and we put this hamhanded brigade in charge of even more of our society.

As government pours more billions into our schools, and takes greater control, the kids seem to get dumber. Is a federal war on ignorance the answer, or should we return to parental authority, and allow private alternatives to flourish?

The infrastructure *is* falling apart, but the federal and state governments are broke, and in the process of breaking us. Rather than mobilizing inefficient public institutions to build more roads, dams, and bridges, why not turn this over to the private sector? Then users would bear the burden instead of taxpayers, and businessmen would call the tune instead of bureaucrats.

Who thinks the poor (as versus their self-appointed spokesmen) are better off today than in 1966, when LBJ declared his war on poverty? America's ghettos are in relatively worse shape by every measure. Should we continue to subsidize leisure and penalize work, or try letting people be responsible for themselves?

American medical costs have been on a rocket ride since the establishment of Medicare. Doctors on the federal dole may get rich, and the medical bureaucracy may be rosy cheeked, but the middle class can't afford insurance. Is the answer turning our semi-socialized system into a full-fledged Dr. Post Office, or injecting a little free-market competition into a protected and therefore arthritic industry?

The drug war, despite ex-czar William Bennett's claim , is another loser. By raising prices, it has made the drug trade more profitable and encouraged users to switch from low-potency drugs to high-potency ones. Heroin sales, for example, are skyrocketing.

Unlike the people of many other countries, Americans tend to be cynical about government. This helps keep us free. To the extent that war makes people forget their cynicism, it hurts us all.

Already, the administration and the Congress have approved an "emergency" $4.1 billion spending bill exempt from the allegedly ironclad rules of last winter's budget summit. This classic pork-barrel legislation spends more on foreign aid, welfare, and chicken inspection in Maryland, among other key national priorities. And, as a result of the Wise syndrome, there was *no controversy* about the bill's contents or its budget-busting nature.

If we let him, Congressman Wise and his friends will do to the American taxpayer what the Air Force did to the Republican Guard. ●

Cop to King: "Go Tell Your Friends"

by L.H.R.Jr.

The next time an L.A. cop is murdered, it *might* make the metro section. The front page will be devoted to Rodney G. King, saint and martyr.

Before King stars in a mini-series, lectures at the Kennedy School of Government, or gets the $56 million he's demanded, I'd like to dissent.

King, described by his salivating lawyers as "kind and gentle," is a convicted armed robber, and his behavior on the night he entered history shows he had not reformed. Responsible people don't drive drunk 100 mph on crowded streets, or resist arrest when caught.

As late as the 1950s, our cities were different. Robberies, rapes, and murders were relatively rare. Today, urban terrorists rule our streets. What the heck happened?

Drug prohibition increases crime, just as alcohol prohibition did. The court system is a joke.

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Government won't allow us to protect ourselves with guns. And a depraved culture sees hoodlums as poor babies instead of evildoers. But these are not the full explanation.

Street criminals have what economists call a "high time preference." They want it and they want it now. To old-fashioned criminologists, felons seeking immediate gratification had to be punished quickly. Otherwise there would be no deterrence.

Movie audiences cheered when Batman—a private law enforcer—beat two muggers, saying, "Go tell your friends about me."

When I was a kid, the police imitated Batman. If a robber bashed an old man's head in, or a rapist destroyed a young woman's life, there was paddy-wagon justice in addition to the more formal sort. Criminals were terrified of the cops, so honest people could live their lives in peace.

The punks who roam our streets today know they probably won't be arrested. if they are arrested, they probably won't be convicted. if they are convicted, they probably won't go to jail. And if they do go to jail, they face a short sentence amidst weight rooms, color television, and law libraries. The result is the breakdown of society.

Would we be shown, endlessly, a video of Rodney G. King's crimes? No one seems to care about crime victims, or the now-strengthened criminal lobby, whose "reforms" will create even more victims.

The police, whatever their faults, try to guard us from the barbarians—if the Visigoths will excuse the analogy. That job will now be made harder.

America is stuffed with harmful police—from tax to regulatory to anti-styrofoam. Meanwhile, the legitimate ones are under attack. Unlike many of my fellow libertarians, I haven't forgotten—amidst the King canonization—that we need to battle private crime as well as big government.

Maybe We Could Hose Down the Government

by L.H.R., Jr.

In California's gold rush days, miners developed a system of private water rights based on first use. But that system was eroded by the courts. Water, we were told, was too important to be left to the private sector. Only politicians could be trusted.

In California's gold rush days, miners developed a system of private water rights.

When we get bad service from a business, we get angry and go elsewhere. When we get bad service from the government, we shrug. There's no place else to go, and besides, who expects anything else? We assume, for example, that mail service has to be slow, technologically antiquated, and expensive. And it does, as long as the government is in charge.

If California had a socialist food system, there would be breakfast shortages and supper rationing. The politically powerful would have banquets; the average citizen would get crumbs. Food police would inspect your garbage.

It is no different with water.

In a free market, the price system balances supply and demand so that one doesn't outrun the other. Shortages are a governmental creation. If the feds had frozen gas prices in response to the Gulf, we'd have long lines. Far better to let prices rise, so drivers can fill up without waiting two hours.

In a drought, water prices should also rise. When there's no drought, they should fall. But a socialist enterprise like the Los Angeles Metropolitan Water District can't set the right price anymore than a Soviet collective farm.

So government uses force. It fines people who sprinkle their lawns or take long showers. And it orders citizens to cut water use by up to 70%. Not that our rulers are consistent. In West Covina, a man got a ticket, and was threatened with a $1,000 fine and six months in jail, for *not* watering his brown lawn—the dread crime of "failure to maintain landscaping."

The man tried to tell the lawn cop that his grass had died of fungus. But government, which

(Continued page 15 col.1)

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MOVIE RATINGS

By Mr. First Nighter

Movie	Rating	Explanation
Dances with Wolves		Another Politically Correct picture with all Injuns noble and all whites evil (except Kevin Costner, of course). Who needs it?
Mr. and Mrs. Bridge		Acting good, especially Paul Newman playing sturdy, admirable Old Culture and Old Right upper-middle-class Mid-Westerner. But you are *supposed* to be opposed to Newman's "repressed" and old-fashioned character, and the movie dribbles along, pointlessly. Joanne Woodward overrated as dim "oppressed" wife.
Godfather, Part III		With reservations. Best movie of the year but not in the same league as giants I and II. Too downbeat, too dominated by crumbling Pacino character, not enough emphasis on excellent young successor as head of the Corleone *famiglia*, Andy Garcia. Some good murder-of-Pope John Paul I revisionism, but no mention of the Masonic connection. Garcia for Godfather IV?
Pretty Woman		Pleasant little movie, bitterly attacked by Left as "unrealistic" and pro-yuppie materialism. Actually, one more invenerable and charming whore-with-heart-of-gold-redeemed by true love tradition. So what if true love is aggressive young millionaire financier, also redeemed by true love?
The Silence of the Lambs		Features a psychotic, murderous, cannibal shrink, therefore hailed by the Left as offering profound insight into the human condition.
Alice		Woody Allen's latest, *not funny* at all. Instead, left-wing message picture. Dumpy, whiny Mia Farrow plays bored rich wife who magically Learns About Herself by taking magic potions from elderly, creaky Asiatic Healer. Therefore she scraps wealth, goes to India to commune with Mother Theresa, and learns to love the simple virtues of poverty. Pass it up.
Scenes From a Mall		Woody Allen funny *as actor* in Paul Mazurky's pleasant little movie, and meshes well with Bette Midler, fortunately toned down for the occasion. But it is too thin, one joke stretched for two hours about a married couple who celebrate their anniversary, break up, and reunite, all within the confines of a Beverly Hills mall. Predictable, throughout.

- M.N.R.

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(Hose Down...cont. from P.13)
ought to understand—indeed feel a kinship with—fungus, refused to listen.

Meanwhile, farmers in the central valley get federally subsidized water welfare—$8 per acre foot rather than $200 to non-farmers. As a result, millions of acre-feet drain away in earthen ditches and evaporate in prodigal spray systems. If farmers had to pay the real price, they would install drip-irrigation systems and line their ditches with concrete, or go out of business. But lobbying in Washington and Sacramento keeps them in water at the expense of dried-out homeowners and taxpayers in the rest of the state.

Water is too precious to be left to the politicians.

Despite what government judges have held, water is too precious to be left to the politicians. Only private, competitive water companies and a free price system can solve the water problem. That would be the *real* Big Green initiative. ●

Mr. Bush's Recession

by L.H.R., Jr.

President Bush and his advisers have finally said that well, yes, perhaps, just possibly, maybe, yeah, we are in a recession. But nothing to worry about, voters.

In fact, we are in a grim economic slide that the Bush administration has made worse.

Presidents pretend that slumps are part of the natural order, like droughts or floods. They want credit for good times, but when the bad times hit, it's: "Who, me?"

In fact, busts, and the booms that precede them, are products of executive-branch monetary policy. Nor is the Federal Reserve autonomous. As Fed chairman Arthur Burns once pointed out, if the central bank didn't do what the White House wanted, it would lose its independence (*i.e.* its lush lifestyle).

When the Fed expands the money supply, it causes a synthetic boom by artificially lowering interest rates. This causes businessmen to borrow and invest more than they would otherwise, and more than actual consumer savings can pay for. The inevitable result is a correction. Most businesses are profitable most of the time. When—all at once—many businesses become unprofitable, you know the government is at fault.

That has been the story of every previous boom and bust in this century, and this one is no different. The Fed expanded money and credit from 1982 on, creating the apparent prosperity of the 80s. Then it slowed the rate of expansion, to preserve the dollar internationally.

Yet a recession need not last long—provided the Fed doesn't expand again, and the market is left free to adjust. The post-World War I depression, for example, was over quickly

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because the Harding administration did nothing. During the Great Depression, however, Hoover and Roosevelt did everything, and did it wrong, prolonging the suffering for many years.

Today, the Bush administration is making Hoover-Roosevelt-style mistakes:

1) the Fed is expanding credit again. The result will be more distortion, and an *inflationary* recession.

2) the day after Bush owned up to the recession, sort of, his new taxes went into effect. Every school of economic thought—Austrian, Keynesian, Monetarist, Supply-Side, etc.—says that raising taxes during a recession is a bad mistake. The last Republican to do it was Herbert Hoover.

3) Bush's new Americans With Disability Act (ADA) will cost business hundreds of billions of dollars—in a recession—by mandating that all facilities be accessible to disabled people, even if it means reconstructing whole buildings. The ADA orders businesses to spend company money overcoming job applicants' handicaps, whatever they are. And firms will have to spend millions defending themselves from a wave of ADA-related litigation.

The Bush administration is making Hoover-Roosevelt-style mistakes.

Note: since the ADA only applies to firms with 15 or more employees, small businesses that can't afford reconstruction and legal costs are laying off employees to bring themselves under the limit. Job creation, D.C. style.

4) Bush's Clear Air Act (CAA), in the name of eliminating a non-existent ozone hole and the non-problem of "acid rain," fastens $50 billion worth of new regulations on the back of American business. No longer can firms choose the most cost-effective production processes; now they will have to prove to multiple levels of federal bureaucrats that they are Green, and spend plenty of it in the process.

5) the government's obsession with race quotas—bolstered by the new Civil Rights Act—will force business to put social engineering ahead of efficiency at an even greater rate. When the race police are breathing down your neck, demanding that you prove that you are not a race criminal, it's hard to focus on the purpose of free enterprise: producing a good product at the lowest possible cost.

6) government spending, which always harms the economy, has gone through the roof—after the roof was raised. Thanks to Operations Desert Shield and Taxpayer Spear (also known as the S&L bailout), not to speak of increased spending on government "services," hundreds of extra billions are being siphoned from the productive sector into the parasitical.

None of this would be good for a healthy economy. For a sick one, it can be deadly. ●

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